

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph is moot in view of the cancellation of Claim 3.

Withdrawal of the objection to Claim 17 is respectfully requested in view of the amendment to Claim 17 to depend from Claim 13.

Claim 1 is rejected as being unpatentable over Persoons in view of Takano.

It is respectfully submitted that Applicants' foreign priority claim is perfected in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.55(a)(3) in view of the enclosed verified translation of the foreign priority document. Persoons' July 15, 2003 filing date is therefore antedated by this application's December 20, 2002 foreign priority date. In other words, as a result of perfection of this application's foreign priority, Persoons has been removed as prior art with respect to this application.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is allowable, and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1 as being unpatentable over Persoons in view of Takano is respectfully requested.

New independent Claim 22 is also believed to be allowable.

The dependent claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence from allowable independent claims. Thus, a detailed discussion of the additional distinguishing features recited in the dependent claims is not set forth at this time.

Early and favorable action with respect to this application is respectfully requested.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful

in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

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